

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1119, RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS
PRESENTATION TO THE

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

BY

MR. RONALD P. HAN
DIRECTOR OF THE STATE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

February 25, 2015

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto and Committee members:

I'm Ron Han, Director of the State Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony in support of the concepts in House Bill 1119 with the following comments:

This measure appropriate funds for burial grants to qualifying Filipino veterans to provide funeral and burial services and transportation of their remains to the Philippines.

Eligible Filipino veterans have earned the right to be buried in a National or State Veterans Cemetery. This is the same entitlement as eligible military members and veterans of the United States Armed Forces. Currently, eligible U.S. Veterans do not receive State or federal compensation for transportation of their remains to their respective state of residency or home of record.

This proposed measure in accordance with HRS 363 and if State funds are available, the amount of \$2,000 dollars maybe provided for the transportation of the remains of eligible Filipino veterans. From the preliminary research with mortuary services in Hawaii, the approximate cost to ship the remains in a sealed casket with all of the proper safety measures adhered to would be approximately \$3,000 dollars. The transportation cost of shipping a casket from Hawaii to Manila in the Philippines would be approximately an additional \$5,000 dollars. Total estimate of the preparation and transportation of remains would be approximately \$8,000 dollars. The preparation and transportation of cremains in a urn would cost considerably less. Besides the cost factor, another point of interest would be the final requested burial location of the eligible Filipino veteran in the Philippines. For example, the cost of the casket transported from Hawaii to any other location other than Manila in the Philippines could drive cost substantially higher.

The OVS supports the intent expressed in this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Hawaii's Veterans and their families in support of HD1119.

The Uniformed Service Member's Voice in Government
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR UNIFORMED SERVICES
Hawaii Chapter (HI-1)

February 23, 2015

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1119

RELATING TO FILIPINOVETERANS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**HEARING ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH AT 2:00PM,
IN CONFERENCE ROOM 308**

Aloha Chair Luke and Vice Chair Nishimoto: Thank you again, for providing this opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 1119. On Capitol Hill the National Association for Uniformed Services (NAUS) is "The Service Member's Voice in Government." Here, in the great State of Hawaii, NAUS Hawaii Chapter (HI-1) serves at the will and pleasure of our nation's largest per-capita uniformed service community.

NAUS Hawaii Chapter (HI-1) members proudly recognize the selfless service performed by our Filipino comrades in arms during WW2. We cannot applaud our State's currently unfunded intentions, regarding their last wishes, to be laid to rest in the country of their birth.

NAUS Hawaii Chapter (HI-1) respectfully urges your committee to pass House Bill 1119, as currently published, with the equitable amount of compensation to be determined during this 28th session of our state legislature.

Thank you for being here for us,

D Egge

Dennis Egge; Chapter President



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TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1119, RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS

PRESENTATION TO THE
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

BY

CARSWELL J. ROSS, JR. Chief Master Sergeant, USAF. Ret.;
Counselor Emeritus, Office of Veterans' Services

Wednesday, February 25, 2015

Good afternoon Chair Silva Luke, Vice Chair Scott Nishimoto, and members of the committee on Finance. I support the intent of this bill which is to assure that Filipino Veterans are provided with funeral and burial services and transportation of their remains to the Philippines. **The reason I cannot provide full support for this measure is that other members of the military who are also veterans are not eligible for the same type of service.**

After a long debate in Congress the Federal law concerning Filipino Veterans changed and they became eligible for burial in a National or State Veterans Cemetery. This placed them on par with all veterans who served. Granting this additional benefit without considering providing the same service to other veterans is an imbalance. If all veterans had the same opportunity to have their remains transported to their home State, then I would be able to offer my full support for this measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment this measure.

FIN-Jo

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
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HB1119

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christopher Acosta	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

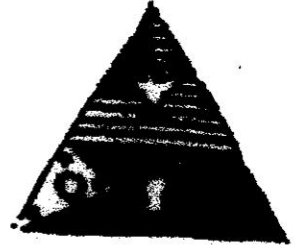
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**WW II Fil-Am Veterans
And LADIES AUXILIARY
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LATE

Date: February 25, 2015

Testimony Statement To Support A Proposed Bill S.1119, State Burial
And Funeral Services Grant to WW II Fil-Am Veterans.

Honorable Chairman and Distinguished Committee Members

My name is Art Aquino Caleda, 91 years old and the past President
and current Adviser of the WW II Fil-Am Veterans and Ladies
Auxiliary, Hawaii Chapter.

I am humbly honored to be invited to render my testimony statement
to support pass legislation the proposed Bill S.1119, State burial and
funeral services grant to Filipino Veterans of WW II residing in Hawaii
passed legislation.

It is very sad to say that the Filipino Veterans of World War II and
their wives and children residing in Hawaii,
far from their aspirations from the US Government, lived solely by their
Social Supplemental Income SSI and Food Stamps considered very
much below the American Standard of living. Many Filipino Veterans
and their wives failed to land on a job so they have no extra income to
augment their (SSI) and Food Stamps income. They are forced to
save to enable them to send part of their dollar money to their family
to the Philippines.

Whenever a veteran passed away, the bereaved family always
experienced hardships to meet the high cost of burial and funeral

expenditures in Hawaii and also, when they send the body to the Philippines. The members of the WW II Fil-Am Veterans and Ladies Auxiliary member resorted to collect voluntary contributions but the collections are too meager and not enough to help because of their low income.

Under such circumstances, I strongly support the immediate pass legislation of the Bill S.1119, State Burial and Funeral Services grant to WW II Filipino Veterans residing in Hawaii and to provide the corresponding appropriations to carry and implement the law.

On behalf of the WW II Fil-Am Veterans and Ladies Auxiliary members, I extend our great appreciation and heartfelt thanks to the honourable committee members to introduced the bill to alleviate the hardships felt by the Filipino Veterans of World War II living in Hawaii.

Mahalo and Mabuhay.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. B. W.', written in a cursive style.